DC COMICS™

THE NEW 52!

BATMAN

30

SCOTT SNYDER

GREG CAPULLO

DANNY MIKI

ZERO YEAR

FINAL ACT

RATED T TEEN

JUN 2014

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75 YEARS OF BATMAN

JULIE.
JULIE!

BRUCE? WHAT THE...? YOU CAN'T BE AT THE GIRLS' HOUSE! IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.

WELL, MS. MADISON, YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO SEE THE COUNTRY. AND TRAFFIC IS LIGHT AT THIS HOUR.

YOU'RE CRAZY. WE'RE SUPPOSED TO JUST WALK OUT OF HERE?

I'M PARKED BEHIND THE ALMA MATER. I BOUGHT CLOTHES FOR YOU, BOUGHT YOU A HELMET.

I BOUGHT ABOUT FIFTY VOLUMES OF THE MANGA SERIES YOU'RE ALWAYS READING. WITH THE ANTHROPOMORPHIC ROBOT BEES? BUZZ BUZZ.

SO...?

...

SOMETIMES I HATE YOU, BRUCE WAYNE.

THEY'RE NOT ROBOT BEES. THEY'RE CYBORGS, JUST MUTATED. AND IT'S REALLY GOOD.

Mm-hhm...

IT IS!

NO, IT SOUNDS AMAZING.

I DETECT SARCASM.

WE'RE FIFTY FEET UP. SARCASM ISN'T ALLOWED. NOW JUST--

--WHAT THE?!

JULIE... YOUR...

WHAT IS IT, BRUCE...?

...WHAT'S *WRONG?*

KANE COUNTY.

ZERO YEAR

SAVAGE CITY

PART ONE

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1: 5,000
0 200 400 600 800m

GC Planetarium
Meet the Dinosaur
Oct. 2nd - Nov 2nd
ARCTIC
WARLOCK SPELLS
DRAGON LORE

THESAURUS

WHERE AM I?

BELL TOWERS. APARTMENT 31J. *THOMAS* RESIDENCE.

I'M A THOMAS. ONE OF FOUR. *DUKE.*

YOU KNOW A SEVEN-LETTER WORD FOR *"UNFRACTURED"?*

...

"INTEGER."

DUKE, I'M *BRUCE WAYNE.* HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN OUT?

SINCE THE *NEW YEAR.*

NEW YEAR? IT WAS *SUMMER* LAST I REMEMBER.

YEAH, IT'S A DIFFERENT KIND OF *CALENDAR* NOW, THOUGH. EVERYTHING'S ENDING AND STARTING OVER ALL AT ONCE.

GO ON, TAKE A LOOK.

MY GOD...

SEE, MR. WAYNE?

WELCOME TO *ZERO YEAR.*

THAT'S WHAT *MR. RIDDLER* CALLS IT. HE SAYS THERE'S JUST *ONE* RULE NOW...

"...GET *SMART*...

"...OR *DIE.*"

BRILLIANT, JIM. KEEP LOOKING DOWN.

UNH!

I WILL QUIT →*PANT PANT*← SMOKING. I WILL.

CRACKLE

COPY-- IT'S *JIM GORDON.* I'M IN POSITION.

COPY?! IS ANYONE *THERE?* COME *IN!* IT'S ALMOST TIME, DAMMIT!

"THE RIDDLER. WHERE IS HE?"

MR. RIDDLER'S *EVERYWHERE.* HE'S WATCHING OVER THE WHOLE CITY. HE'S *PROTECTING* IT. NO ONE COMES IN OR OUT, UNTIL GOTHAM GETS *SMART.*

I NEED TO USE YOUR PHONE.

HE CONTROLS THE TOWERS, THOUGH. IT WON'T WORK.

I HAVE A SPECIAL NUMBER.

MAN, YOU REALLY *ARE* RICH.

BZZT

...HELLO?

ALFRED? ALFRED, IT'S ME.

MASTER BRUCE?! OH, THANK *GOD.* I WAS SURE YOU'D...

...ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? HOW DID YOU SURVIVE?

BY THE SKIN OF MY TEETH, APPARENTLY.

"YOUR *FORMAL* WEAR, SIR?"

I REMEMBER CRAWLING OUT OF THE FLAMING WRECK. I REMEMBER TOSSING MY...MY--

"YES. AND I REMEMBER CRAWLING AWAY FROM THE CRASH. THEN BLACKNESS..."

...NOW, I WAKE UP AND THE CITY...THE CITY IS--

IT'S ***LOST,*** MASTER BRUCE. LOST. THE ENTIRE BORDER OF THE ISLAND, NEARLY NINE PERCENT, IS IRREPARABLY DAMAGED.

THE CENTER, OVERGROWN AND WILD. AND HE CONTROLS IT ALL FROM SOMEWHERE ***INSIDE.*** SOMEWHERE NO ONE CAN FIND HIM.

THE ACCESS POINTS?

THERE'S NO WAY ***IN*** OR ***OUT.*** HE'S FLOODED THE TUNNELS...

...THE CROSSINGS ARE RIGGED WITH EXPLOSIVES...

...AND WHILE HE'S CREATED BARRIERS TO ANY ENTRY, THE ***REAL*** DETERRENT IS THE BARRAGE OF ***WEATHER BALLOONS*** HE'S POSITIONED OVER THE SKYLINE. BALLOONS FILLED WITH DEADLY ***CHEMICALS.***

ANY ATTEMPT TO BREACH THE CITY AND HE SAYS HE'LL UNLEASH A CLOUD OF ***DEATH*** OVER GOTHAM.

"I DON'T UNDERSTAND, ALFRED. HOW DID HE ***DO*** ALL THIS? THE MANPOWER I GET. HE HAD ACCESS TO THE ***RED HOOD*** FILES.

"IF HE THREATENED THE FORMER MEMBERS...BUT THE MATERIAL ***ITSELF?*** HE DIDN'T GET IT FROM US.

"UNLESS...***POWERS?***"

"WELL, HOWEVER HE'S MANAGED IT, SIR, HE NOW HAS THE CITY IN HIS ***GRIP.*** HE USED THE FLOOD TO DISSEMINATE DR. ISLEY'S STOLEN RESEARCH AND TURN ITS STREETS ***SAVAGE.***

"HE USED THE DEVICES STOLEN FROM THE REST TO TAKE CONTROL OF ITS POWER GRID AND ANYTHING ELSE THAT CAN BE REMOTELY CONTROLLED...

"...GOTHAM IS HIS OWN ***DEADLY PLAYGROUND.***"

"HAS ANYONE TRIED TO ***FIGHT*** HIM?"

"AT FIRST, MANY.

"NOW, VERY ***FEW.***"

"THE TRUTH IS, THERE'S BARELY ANYONE LEFT WITH THE *WILL* TO FIGHT."

NO, NO, NO.

BUT, SIR, WHAT MATTERS IS THAT YOU'RE *ALIVE.*

...

SIR? SIR, ARE YOU *THERE?*

BATMAN FAILED THE CITY, ALFRED. *I* FAILED.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

I...I DON'T KNOW. BUT HE'S BEATEN ME *TWICE* NOW, EACH TIME WITH WORSE CONSEQUENCES. I LOSE *THIS* TIME...

*THEN... MAYBE IT'S TIME FOR THE **REASONABLE** THING.*

AND YOU CAN HELP *EFFECTIVELY* FROM OUT HERE...AT THE *MANOR.*

THE *ESCAPE PASSAGE* BENEATH THE BROWNSTONE IN CRIME ALLEY, YOUR FORMER HEADQUARTERS...IT LEADS TO THE *WATERWAYS.* REMEMBER?

IT'S LIKELY ONE OF THE ONLY WAYS OUT OF *GOTHAM* RIGHT NOW.

YOU CAN TELL THE AUTHORITIES WHAT'S GOING ON IN THERE. YOU CAN HELP THEM FUNNEL RESOURCES INTO THE CITY.

*MASTER BRUCE, YOU GO UP AGAINST THIS MAN, **NYGMA,** AND YOU WILL LIKELY FAIL **AGAIN.** AND **DIE.***

*AND WHAT SORT OF **EXAMPLE** DOES BATMAN SET, THEN?*

SIR?

TAKING OFF, *Huh?*

COME *WITH* ME, DUKE. YOUR WHOLE FAMILY. WE CAN HELP PEOPLE FROM OUT OF GOTHAM CITY.

NO. WE'RE HERE.

MY GRAM. SHE'S IN THE NEXT APARTMENT. THE I.V. WE KEPT YOU ON--MY MOM TOOK IT FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN IN CASE HERS FAILED.

Heh. SHAVED YOUR FACE WITH HER LEG RAZORS, TOO. HEY, WHAT'S A SIX-LETTER WORD FOR *"HIT OR MISS"*?

DUKE, LISTEN TO ME--

ALL IT TAKES IS *ONE* RIDDLE, MR. WAYNE. SEE, EVERY SUNSET HE COMES ON THAT BIG SCREEN IN MIDTOWN, THE ONE WITH THE QUESTION MARK BLINKING ON IT...

...MR. RIDDLER COMES ON AND SAYS IF ANYONE CAN ASK A RIDDLE *HE* CAN'T ANSWER, HE'LL GIVE THE CITY *BACK* TO THE PEOPLE.

IT'S WHY I GOT THESE *PUZZLES* OUT. YOU'LL SEE, MR. WAYNE. I'M GOING TO TAKE HIM ON.

DUKE...

THEY ALL SAY I'M *CRAZY.* BUT THEY'LL SEE...

...YOU'RE ONLY CRAZY IF IT DOESN'T *WORK,* RIGHT?

NOW LIKE I SAID...

"...WHAT'S A SIX-LETTER WORD FOR *'HIT OR MISS'*"?

LIEUTENANT.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND... WHERE'S THE *REST* OF YOU? PLEASE TELL ME I'M *SEEING* THINGS.

THIS IS THE TEAM. *DEVGRU* DECIDED ON A MORE TACTICAL APPROACH.

TACTICAL?!

I'VE...I'VE RISKED MY FAMILY, MY FRIENDS TRYING TO FIND WHAT *MIGHT* BE A GEOGRAPHICAL BLIND SPOT FOR YOU, ON THE PROMISE THAT YOU'D COME IN WITH A REAL *TEAM,* WITH REAL *RESOURCES...*

...AND INSTEAD YOU COME IN EARLY, WITH *FIVE MEN IN SPACE SUITS?!* WHAT THE HELL HAVE WE BEEN PLAYING *SMOKE SIGNALS* FOR?

LIEUTENANT. THANKS TO YOU, WE'RE *IN.* AND I'M GRATEFUL. BUT I'D BE CAREFUL TO WATCH YOUR *TONE.* WE DO THIS FOR A LIVING. FROM WHAT I UNDERSTAND, YOU'RE A COP WHO LIKES TO PAL AROUND WITH $%$^! *PSYCHOS* IN *BATSUITS.* NOW LET US--

GOOD EVENING, GOTHAM CITY!

WONDERFUL TO SEE YOU ALL AGAIN NOW →YAWN← AT THIS **MAGIC** HOUR.

AND IT **IS** MAGIC, I CAN SEE THE MAGIC SPARKLING IN THE AIR--CAN'T **YOU?** BECAUSE RIGHT NOW, AS YOU KNOW, IT'S THAT TIME OF DAY WHEN ONE OF YOU, **ANY** OF YOU, HAS THE CHANCE TO STEP FORWARD AND BREAK THE DARK, DARK SPELL I'VE CAST OVER THIS FAIR CITY.

SO, TELL ME...WHO WILL IT BE? GIVE YOUR NAME, AND MOUNT YOUR CHALLENGE!

WHAT'S THAT? SPEAK UP, NOW!

OH, COME ON. ANOTHER DAY WITH NOTHING TO SHOW? NO **HEROES?**

I KNOW THERE HAS TO BE **SOMEONE** OUT THERE WILLING TO TRY. WILLING TO SWING THE GREAT BLADE FOR THEIR CITY!

STAY DOWN. WE CAN MAKE OUR WAY DOWN THE SIDE...

...→SIGH← REALLY? **REALLY?!** WELL, I'M VERY DISAPPOINTED, FOLKS. AFTER ALL, I'M ONLY TRYING TO **HELP** HERE. TO MAKE YOU GOTHAMITES THE **PROMETHEANS** THE WORLD **NEEDS!**

I MEAN, AFTER ALL...WE'RE MANKIND. WE'RE PINK, SQUIRMING, HAIRLESS **THINGS.** NO FANGS, NO CLAWS. WE WERE BASICALLY DESIGNED AS A QUICK **SNACK** ALONG THE EVOLVING FOOD CHAIN.

AND YET, HERE WE ARE, DOMINANT, **RRRREGAL.** AND WHY IS THAT? OUR **BRAINS,** PEOPLE. WE GET COLD, WE INVENT MITTENS. WE GET SICK, WE INVENT CHICKEN SOUP. WE **OUTTHINK** OUR OWN **DEMISE.**

"AND RIGHT NOW, AT THIS MOMENT, WE'RE IN DESPERATE NEED OF SOME ***OUTTHINKING.*** RISING TIDES. DWINDLING RESOURCES. OVERPOPULATION. PAN-GLOBAL CONFLICT. THE WORLD'S LARGEST ECONOMIES RUNNING ON FUMES...

"...ALL ***I'VE*** DONE IS SPEED UP THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

"GOTHAM IS NOW THE ***FUTURE,*** SEE? IT IS THE GRAND RIDDLE, ONE BIGGER THAN EVEN ***I*** CAN SOLVE. SO TAKE IT AWAY FROM ME.

"BE THE ***HERO,*** PEOPLE. THE ONE FOUND IN EVERY CULTURE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. THE HERO WHO ***ANSWERS*** THE RIDDLE TO PROVE HIS ***WORTH,*** TO ***SAVE*** HIS PEOPLE."

SO, WHERE ARE YOU, **HERO?** WHERE ARE YOU **HIDING?**

ARE YOU **OUT THERE,** SOMEWHERE?

→YAWN← ALL I'M ASKING IS FOR YOU TO **SHOW** ME. SHOW ME YOU'RE A SMARTER MAN THAN I, AND I'LL REMOVE THE QUESTION FROM YOUR LIVES, FOR NOW.

NO ONE? ALL RIGHT, THEN...BACK TO SLEEP. TO DREA--

I'LL DO IT, NYGMA.

I'LL →KOFF← I'LL CHALLENGE YOU.

WELL, WELL. I KNOW YOU! GOTHAMITES, MEET **BOB CHEE.** POWERS INDUSTRIES LEAD STRATEGIST. OR **FORMER** STRATEGIST. THEY GAVE HIM THE AXE TO GET ME IN AFTER I LEFT WAYNE ENTERPRISES.

OF COURSE, I ONLY STAYED LONG ENOUGH TO **RAID** THE CUPBOARDS, BUT STILL...GO AHEAD, BOB. THESE ARE YOUR TOYS, AFTER ALL!

ALL RIGHT. MY RIDDLE IS, THERE ONCE WERE TWO TURTLES TRYING TO CROSS A RIVER. BUT EACH ALONE, THEY--

THEY'RE BOTH **BLIND.**

...

BUT HOW DID YOU...*I MADE THAT RIDDLE UP!*

GIVEN YOUR OBSESSION WITH **SONIC WARFARE,** BOB (NOT TO MENTION THE AWFUL **JAZZ LIBRARY** YOU LEFT BEHIND), IT'S NOT A GREAT LEAP TO ASSUME YOUR RIDDLE WOULD LEAN TOWARD A SORT OF **AUDITORY SNOBBERY.**

SOME FACT ABOUT LISTENING. AND SINCE TURTLES HAVE NO EARS, I CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT YOUR...WELL, YOU GET THE IDEA.

AGGHHAH!

YOU'RE A *MONSTER!*

LET US GO! WE'RE *DYING* HERE!

FOLKS, I'M NOT THE BAD GUY HERE. A GIVER OF TOUGH LOVE, SURE. BUT I'M **FAIR.** I SET UP RULES AND PLAY BY THEM.

BUT, TONIGHT...

...TONIGHT I SENSE THERE'S SOMEONE OUT THERE WHO'S TRYING TO **BREAK** THE RULES. WHO'S TRYING TO CHEAT THEIR WAY OUT OF MY QUIZ...

...WHERE COULD THEY BE? HMM...

...AH!

ZZT

THERE YOU ARE!

DAMN.

NOW, NOW, FELLAS. WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO **SAY** FOR YOURSELVES?

LOOK, MR. NYGMA, WE'RE NOT HERE TO CAUSE *FURTHER CONFLICT.*

IS... IS THERE ANY WAY TO SPEAK IN *PRIVATE?*

IN PRIVATE? COME NOW, SIR. NO PASSING NOTES!

ALL RIGHT...

THIS ISN'T HOW IT WAS MEANT TO GO. BUT, OUR MESSAGE TO YOU IS...

...YOU *WIN.*

INSIDE THIS SUITCASE IS NEARLY *FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS* IN WHAT ARE KNOWN AS *FLOATING BILLS.* OR "AMNESIA CASH." THE SERIAL NUMBERS ARE DELIBERATELY UNTRACEABLE, CREATED BY AN ALGORITHM THAT FORGETS ITS OWN DESIGNATIONS.

YOU ¢^*% *COWARDS!* YOU *LYING* PIECES OF--

WHIRRRRRR...

LANGUAGE, LIEUTENANT GORDON. LANGUAGE. YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY: "PROFANITY IS A *WEAK MIND* TRYING TO EXPRESS ITSELF FORCEFULLY."

ACTUALLY, IT'S "...A *FEEBLE MIND...*"

YOU ¢^%#.

HA! WELL, CLEARLY, YOU BUNCH AREN'T UP FOR A RIDDLE. AND I'M AFRAID THERE'LL BE NO DEALS OR BARGAINS.

SO, HOW ABOUT A SIMPLER GAME. MAYBE SOMETHING LIKE, OH, I DON'T KNOW...

?

...DOMINOES?

...

THE BUILDINGS ARE HEADED STRAIGHT FOR US! WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF--

WHAT'S THE **MATTER,** FELLAS? NOT DOMINOES FANS? ALL RIGHT THEN, HOW ABOUT A GAME OF **RING AROUND THE ROSIE?**

THE RULES, WELL, THEY'RE A LITTLE **DIFFERENT** THAN YOU MIGHT EXPECT, BUT STILL FAMILIAR ENOUGH. THE KEY IS TO BE **FAST PUPILS!**

NOW...I'VE PROGRAMMED THESE **RIDDLER-BOTS** IN A RING AROUND YOU.

I'VE SET THEIR DVT'S TO M-D. YOU KNOW WHAT **THAT** IS?

MOTION DETECTION. MR. NYGMA--

NOW, POWERS' TECH IS SLOW TO ACCEPT CHANGE, SO YOU **MAY** HAVE TIME TO GET OFF **ONE SHOT,** LIEUTENANT.

BEFORE THEY OPEN FIRE. BUT LIKELY JUST THAT ONE. SO MAKE IT THE **RIGHT** ONE...

...OR IT'S CERTAINLY ASHES, ASHES, AND YOU **ALL FALL DOWN.**

MR. NYMGA! MR. NYGMA **PLEASE,** IF YOU'D JUST--

PANIC

LIEUTENANT! GO FOR THE ONE IN *FRONT!* IT'S LIKELY THE LEADER!

NYGMA'S THEIR LEADER! THEY'RE ROBOTS! AND THAT'S TOO SIMPLE.

SIR! WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF--

GORDON! *TAKE THE SHOT!* I SAID, TAKE THE--

THE *EYE!*

SHOOT THE EYE, DAMMIT! HE TOLD YOU TO BE *FAST PUPILS.* DO IT, LIEUTENANT.

THEN NONE OF YOU MOVE! STAY *STILL!*

I DON'T KNOW WHO JUST SAID THAT, BUT GORDON, I'M GIVING YOU A *DIRECT ORDER,* BY COMMAND OF THE ##$% PRESIDENT OF THE--

WHIRRRRR...

LOOK! IT'S *WORKING!*

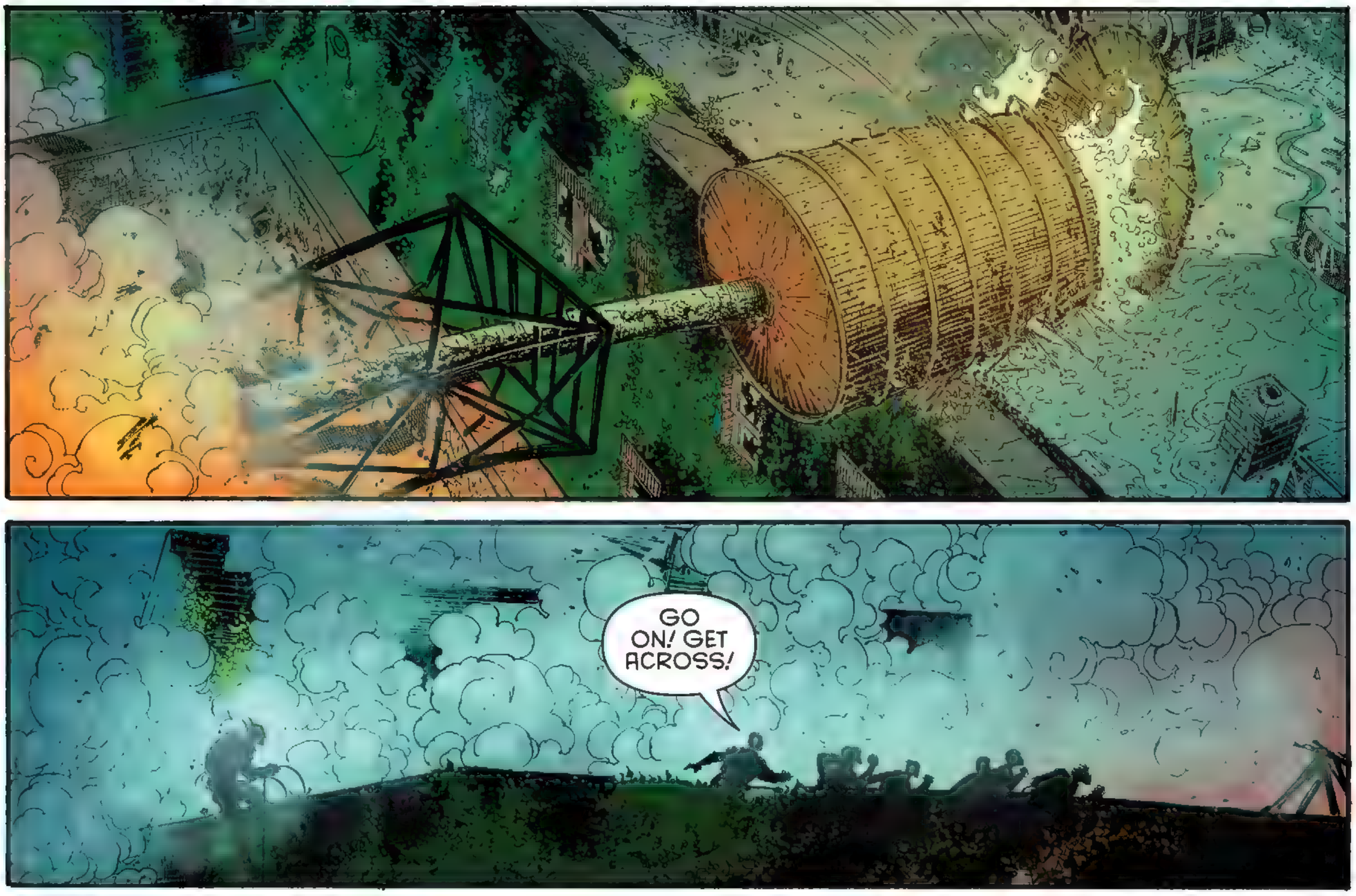
JUST STAY *STILL!* DON'T MOVE A MUSCLE!

NOT UNTIL THEY'VE TAKEN EACH OTHER OUT!

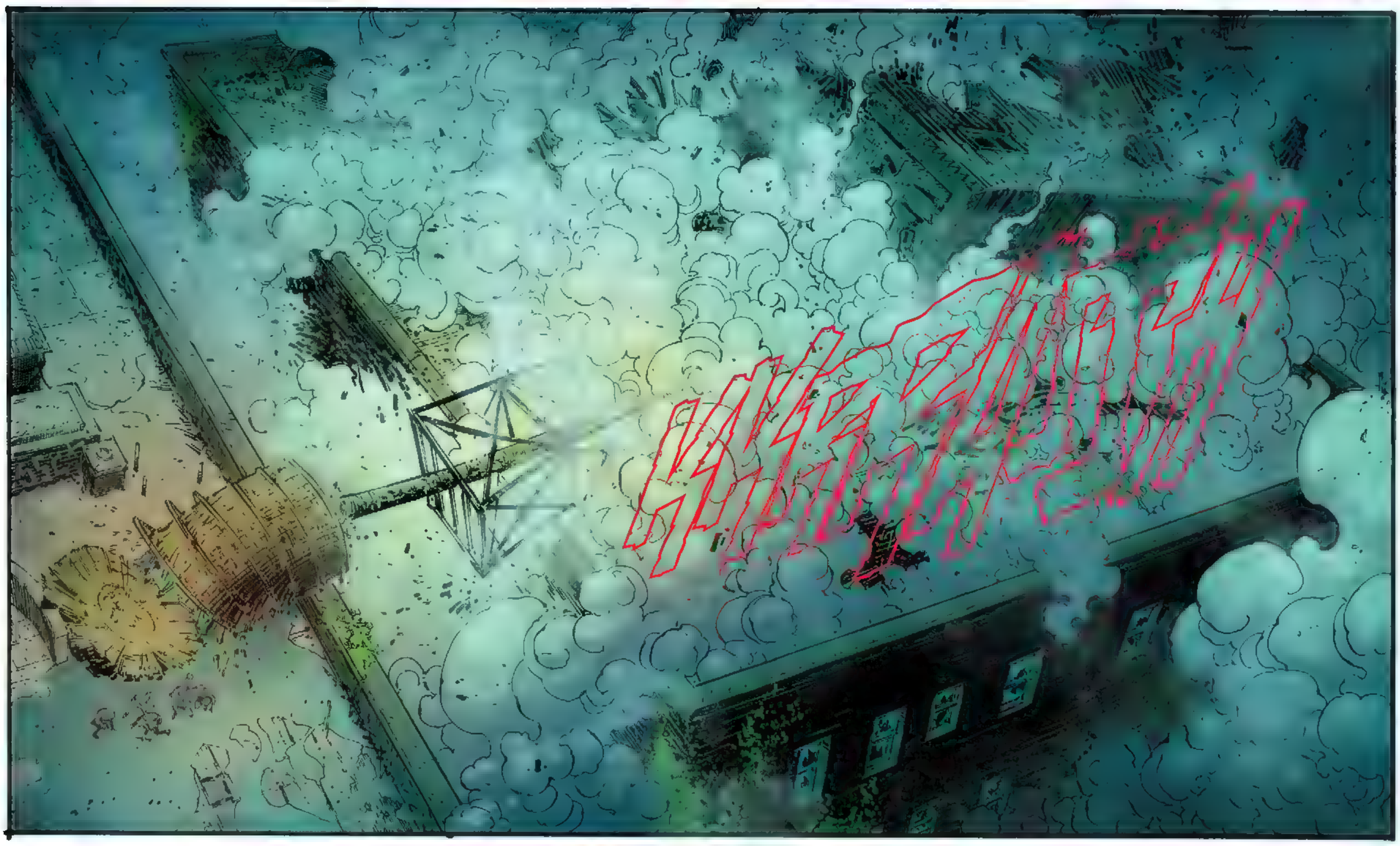
A LOT OF GOOD IT DID! WE'RE STILL *TRAPPED!*

Heh. TELL ME I SEE WHAT I *THINK* I SEE...

WHAT IN THE--?!


GO ON! GET ACROSS!

MOVE, MOVE, MOVE! BEFORE THE BUILDING--



=>PANT PANT<= WAS THAT *HIM*, LIEUTENANT? THE ONE WHO *HELPED* US?

IT *WAS*, WASN'T IT?

I'LL CATCH THE NEXT ONE

GENTLEMEN, MEET MY FRIEND...

...THE "$%$^! *PSYCHO IN A BATSUIT."*

NO OFFENSE.

NONE TAKEN.

WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG?

I WAS DOING A CROSSWORD. GOT CAUGHT ON A SIX-LETTER WORD FOR "HIT OR MISS." THE ANSWER, LIEUTENANT...

...WAS *STRIKE.*

DAMN RIGHT.

AND CALL ME *JIM.*

NEXT: ANOTHER CHALLENGER?

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BREAKING *FLASH* NEWS ON CHANNEL 52!

WHILE COVERING A STORY ON THE FLASH'S EFFORTS TO RESTORE CENTRAL CITY AFTER THE CRIME SYNDICATE'S ATTACK, WE CAPTURED PROOF THAT *ANOTHER* SPEEDSTER HAS ARRIVED ON THE SCENE!

MORE FROM OUR OWN CALENDAR MAN, JUST BACK FROM A MONTHS-LONG DISAPPEARANCE.

CHANNEL 52 BREAKING NEWS

INDEED MR. BUG... I HAVE RETURNED!

AND I BRING NEWS FROM THE FUTURE! BECAUSE EARLY REPORTS HAVE STATED THAT THIS NEW CHARACTER IS ACTUALLY THE FLASH--BUT FROM A FUTURE TIMELINE!

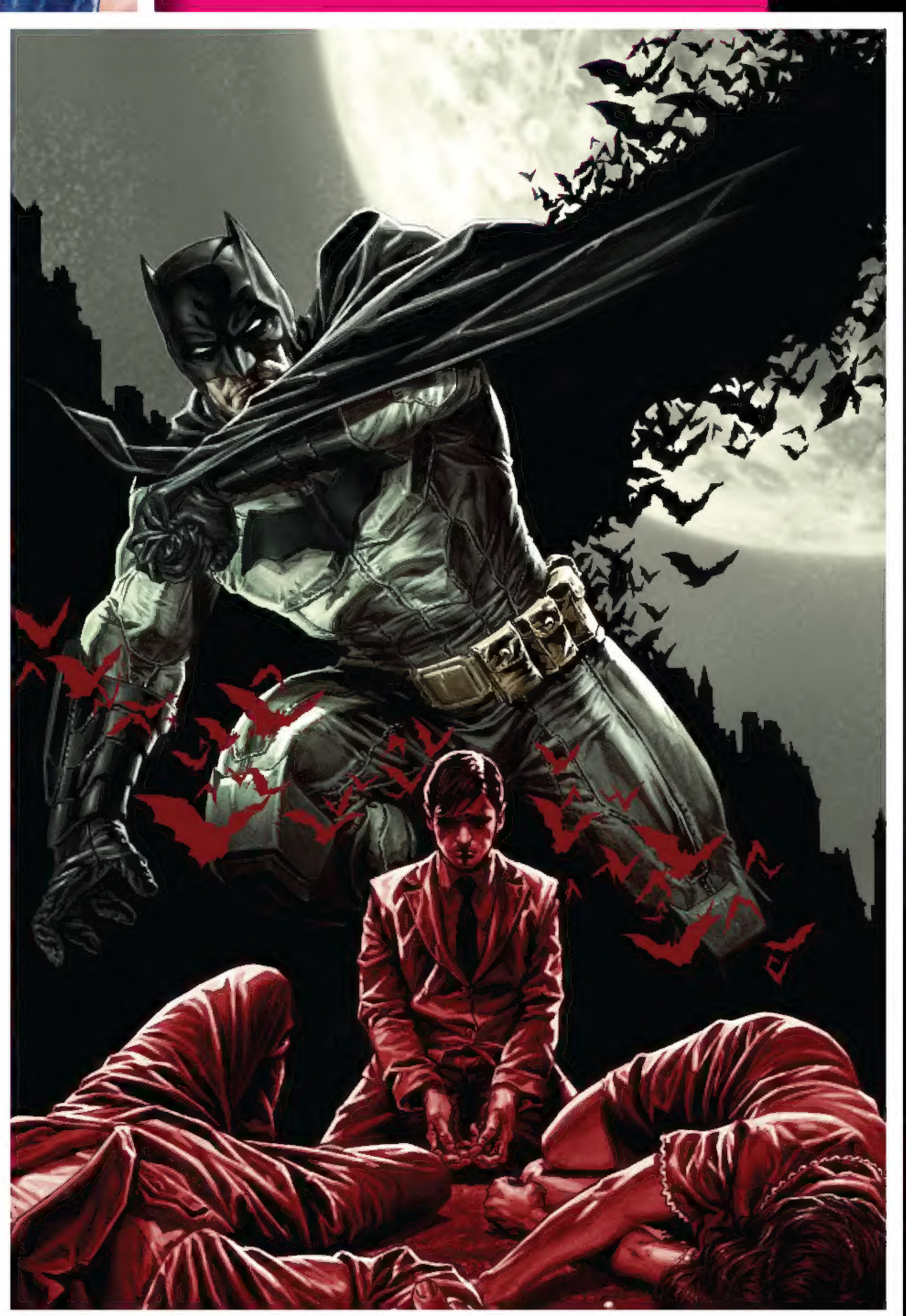
WHO IS THIS MYSTERIOUS BLUE-HUED SPEEDSTER? IS HE HERE TO HELP CENTRAL CITY IN A TIME OF NEED? OR DESTROY IT ONCE AND FOR ALL?

WE HOPE THE FORMER RATHER THAN THE LATTER, OBVIOUSLY...

FOR MORE NEWS ON WHO'S WHO, BE SURE TO CHECK BACK WITH CHANNEL 52

SINCE THE DAWN OF THE NEW 52...

...fans have been asking to see how all of these changes effected the origins of their favorite characters. And now we are happy to say that those answers are forthcoming – every month in the pages of our new SECRET ORIGINS series! Secret Origins will dive into the past of the entire New 52 by examining the histories of several characters! Issue #1 begins with a bang as the origins of Superman, Supergirl, and the first Robin, Dick Grayson are revealed! Secret Origins #2 delivers the goods on Batman, Aquaman and Startfire! Who will be the next character to have their secret origin revealed? Tune in every month to find out!



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